

which, the traditional explanations of the first *viva* *wee* interpreters, or, perhaps, of the authors of the hymns themselves, have come down to his time. The explanation of a living teacher, or of a 'commentator' must have "been indispensable to a right understanding of the meaning of the *Suktas*, in many passages, from the moment of their first communication: and the probability is in favour of an oral instructor, as most in harmony with the unconnected and unsystematic currency of the hymns* with the restricted use of writing, — even if the art were known in those early times (a subject of considerable doubt), — and with the character of Sanskrit teaching, even in the present-day, in which the study of books is subordinate to the personal and traditional expositions of the teacher, handed down to Mm through an indefinite series of preceding instructors.

At last, however, there arrived a period when the antiquity of the hymns, the obscurity of their style, the peculiarities of the language, and the number to which they had multiplied, with the corresponding difficulties of recollecting and teaching them, and, possibly, also, the perception, that some

venerable
authority on which their growing claims to
superior
sanctity might be based was wanting,
suggested, to
the pr[^]gresssive advancement of the
literature of the
Brajimans, the expediency of rescuing the
dispersed and
obsolete *Suktas* from the risk of oblivion,
and mould-
ing them into some consistent and
permanent shape.
The accomplishment of this object is
traditionally
ascribed to the soA of PAnlsAHA *liishi*,